Khao Lumpee - Had Thai Muang National Park

This National Park was established in 1986, and covers an area of 72 sq. km. It comprises 2 seperate geographical areas: Khao Lumpee (mountain area) and Had Thai Muang (beach area).

Had Thai Muang: National Park headquarters and beach area is 6 km from town and comprises 14 km of quiet, undisturbed beach lined with Casuarina trees. The park stretches to the North as far as the hill in the distance (Khao Nayak), and to the South as far as the signboard on the access road. The park continues inland for about 1/2 km to include the mangrove forest along the edge of the sea inlet.

The park provides a variety of habitats for wildlife, including mangrove, coastal scrub and water filled pits from old tin mining operations. A number of people live within the park, gaining a living from coconut cultivation and fishing.

Geology: The geology of the region consists of recent Quaternary sediments laying over older igneous rocks. The sediments are mainly quartz and mica sands and cover the coastal plain, these sediments are derived from the weathering of the upland area. The mountains consist of igneous granite rocks as indicated by the typical granite dome shaped mountains, clearly visible in the peaks around Lumpee waterfall. The Granite rocks are rich in Mica and were laid down between 60-140 million years ago during the Cretaceous period. This particular geology has important ecomomic deposits including Tin which was once extracted in many areas around the park. This practice is no longer viable as indicated by the many disused tin workings, buildings and settling ponds found in the park.

Flora and Fauna: The park consists of four habitat zones these are;

Tropical evergreen forest, this occurs on the forested hills of Khao Lumpee and covers about 70% of the total park area. The principle tree species recorded includes; *Dipterocarpus* sp., *Anisoptera costata*, *Syzygium* sp., *Hopea odorata*, *Mimusops elengi*, several palm (*Palmae*) species and Bamboo (*Gramineae*).

Mangrove forest, is found on the banks of the chlongs (canals) particularly in the area behind the headquaters. The mangrove species are adapted to survive in brackish water and only occur where fresh and sea water mix. At Had Thai Muang species recorded include; *Rhizophora mucronata*, *R. apiculata*, *Avicennia* spp., *Xylocarpus* spp., *Sonneratia caseolaris*, *S. alba*, *Bruguiera parviflora* and *B. cylindrica*.

Beach forest, this covers the coastal area above the beach and is dominated by the pine tree (*Casurina equisetifolia*) other species occuring include; *Barringtonia asiatica*, *Terminalia catappa* and *Derris indica*.

Swamp forest, occurs in small patches in the region between the beach forest and the mangrove forest. It only occurs in swamp areas free from salt water. The swamp forest species includes *Melaleuca leucadendra*.

Wildlife, the park has a relatively varied fauna considering its small size. This is due to the two seperate geographical parts of the park being very different habitats. At Khao Lampee forest species are found including; Wild pig (*Sus scrofa*), Common barking deer (*Muntiacus muntjak*), Langurs (*Presbytis* sp.), Red jungle fowl (*Gallus gallus*), Hill Myna (*Gracula religiosa*), Recticulated python (*Python reticulatus*) and several reptile and amphibian species. At Had Thai Muang coastal, marine and species tolerant of man are found, including; Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*), Olive Ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea*), Common myna (*Acridotheres tristis*), Macaques (*Macaca* sp.) and also Common palm civet (*Paradoxurus hermaphroduus*) especially near the coconut plantations.

Tourism points

Thai Muang Beach, is protected primarily as a nesting site for 2 species of sea turtles the Leatherback and the Olive Ridley. The females come ashore to lay their eggs between November and April. Unfortunately sea turtles are now very rare, and only a few come ashore.

In the nesting season, the beach is patrolled by park staff who remove the eggs from the nests they find and take them to a nursery (on the beach by the sentry box). This is done because the eggs are considered good to eat and fetch a high price. Nests left on the beach would be poached.

The eggs incubate for about 60 days. The hatchlings are released naturally into the sea as soon as they are born. **Please do not go out looking for turtles on your own.** You are welcome to join a patrol ask a ranger at the office. If you are interested in learning more about sea turtles, there are leaflets at the office printed in English.

Sea turtles are protected world wide, and it is illegal to take stuffed turtles or shells into other countries. You can help protect them by not eating turtle eggs or buying souvenirs made from their shells.

Khao Lumpee, The inland section of the park, covers a waterfall and surrounding forested hills, it is located about 16 km from the park headquarters. To get there: turn left at the junction in Thai Muang and continue for about 10 km until you see a blue sign for the waterfall. Turn right and continue up the track for about 2 km.

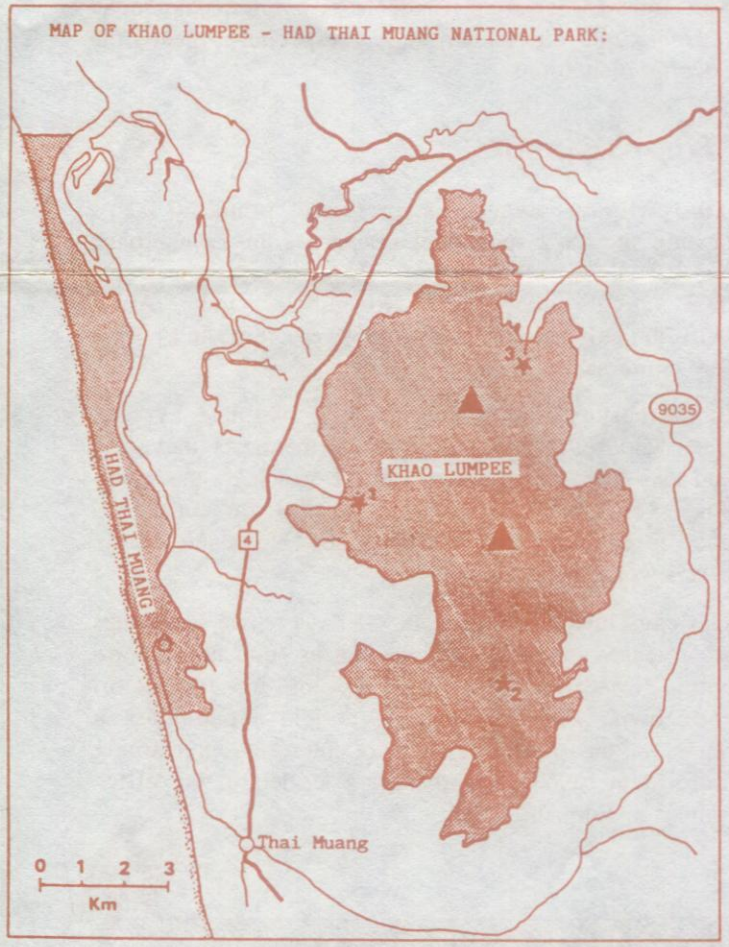
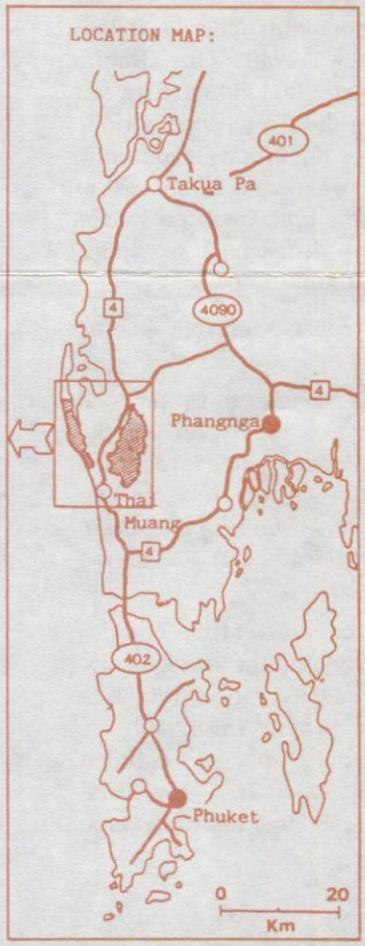
The waterfall is a local attraction and has a pool suitable for swimming at its base. Meals and drinks can be purchased at the several small stalls located near the waterfall.

Accommodation

In the headquarters, there are 4 bungalows - please ask at the park office. Camping is allowed and there are public toilets. Food and drinks can be purchased at the Canteen. Electricity is available 24 hours a day. Drinking water can be purchased in the Canteen or you can take rainwater from the tank near the Canteen. Water in the bathrooms is ground water and is only pumped during the day.

Accomodation should be booked in advance either at **Khao Lumpee-Had Thai Muang National park, Thai Muang District, Phang-nga Province 82120** or at the **Reservations office, National Park Division, Royal Forest Department, Chatuchak, Bangkok, 10900. Tel (02) 5790529, 5794842, 5795269.**

Warning

SWIMMING IS NOT POSSIBLE DURING THE MONSOON SEASON (May - November) At other times of the year, stay close to the shore and be careful because there can be a strong undertow.

According to the National Parks Act of 1961, the following activities are permitted; swimming, diving, sports. picnicing and camping. Tents are permitted provided you set them up yourself. Leave anything valuable at the office if you plan to be away from your site for many hours. Please heed any warnings or advice that park staff may have. Be sure to notify park staff if you make a fire, and do not take any branches from trees, use only wood off the ground and be sure to extinguish your fire with water or sand before leaving the site. **Respect the local culture and religion; nude or topless sunbathing is forbidden.** Do not disturb other guests or wildlife. Stay on established trails, if you want a guide ask one of the rangers in the office.